

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES OPENING FILM
FOR SPRING SHOWCASE
*Film Festival Starts Friday, April 16***

HONOLULU, HI (March 11, 2010) – The Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF) is pleased to host the Hawaii premiere of MAO'S LAST DANCER as its Opening Night Film for the Spring Showcase. From acclaimed Australian director Bruce Beresford who won an Academy Award for Best Picture for DRIVING MISS DAISY, MAO'S LAST DANCER is the true story of Li Cunxin, a world-class dancer who defected from China to the United States in 1981.

The film adaptation of Cunxin's autobiography features Hawaii's very own Amanda Schull as the lead character's love interest and newcomer Chi Cao in the leading role of a poverty-stricken Chinese boy who becomes a world-famous ballet star. Schull had her big film break back in 2000 when she was cast in the film CENTER STAGE. MAO'S LAST DANCER will screen Friday, April 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Theaters.

HIFF's Spring Showcase is being held from April 16 – 22 at the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Theaters. The final movie lineup and program guide will soon be unveiled. Tickets go on sale for HIFF Ohana members on Monday, April 5th and to the general public on Wednesday, April 7th.

General tickets for the public are available for \$12, \$10 for seniors, students and military. HIFF Ohana members can purchase tickets for \$8. The tickets can be purchased at the HIFF box office located at 650 Iwilei Rd, Suite 100, across from the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Cinemas, online at www.hiff.org or by phone at (808) 792-1577.

For press-related inquiries, please contact Chimaine Pouteau at chimaine@hawaiipacificentertainment.com. Images of the films can be downloaded from this link: <http://picasaweb.google.com/hiff2009images/2010SpringImagesForPress?authkey=Gv1sRgCNXK5IjV8-64RA#>

FILM SYNOPSIS
MAO'S LAST DANCER
Hawaii Premiere

MAO'S LAST DANCER tells the inspirational true story of a small boy's extraordinary journey from poverty to international stardom. From a grueling apprenticeship as a classical dancer in communist China, to the glory of creative freedom in America. But, there is a painful price to be paid for his quest for self expression. MAO'S LAST DANCER captures the intoxicating effects of first love and celebrity, the pain of exile, and ultimately the triumph of individual endeavor over ideology.

Director: Bruce Beresford

Cast: Chi Cao, Bruce Greenwood, Kyle MacLachlan, Joan Chen, Amanda Schull

Australia 2009 | English, Mandarin w/ English subtitles | 117 min.

[Festival Information](#)

Hawaii International Film Festival, established in 1981, is dedicated to the advancement of understanding and cultural exchange among the peoples of Asia, the Pacific and North America through the medium of film. HIFF is the premier international film event in the Pacific and has won the praise of governments, filmmakers, scholars, educators, programmers and film industry leaders throughout the world. It is also the primary source for the discovery and exhibition of Asian and Pacific feature films, documentaries and videos in the nation. The festival has premiered such movies as ONCE WERE WARRIORS, THE PIANO, SHINE, SHALL WE DANCE, Y TU MAMA TAMBIEN and CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON.

The 2010 Hawaii International Film Spring Festival will be held April 16-22, 2010 at the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Theaters and the 30th Annual Hawaii International Film Fall Festival will be held in October 2010. For more information please visit our website at www.hiff.org.

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